

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

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Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Mike Borgonzi
Carnell Tate
Keldric Faulk
Robert Saleh

Draft Press Conference



MIKE BORGONZI: Welcome. An exciting day here. What's better than having one first-round pick than having two? We couldn't be more site to welcome Carnell Tate and Keldric Faulk to the Titans organization, just two obviously outstanding football players. They are even better human beings. They embody everything we want this in this organization: Work ethic, resiliency, toughness, intelligence. They have it all, and that's why they are sitting up here today.

Without further ado, we'll open it up to questions here.

Q. Carnell, since getting drafted, obviously it's been a busy whirlwind, but have you ever had a chance to do a little more homework to learn about the team you're joining, particularly the offense and the quarterback?

CARNELL TATE: Yes, since being drafted, that's what I've been doing, watching videos of all the guys here. Bunch of great group of guys here, great coaches, great players. Just getting familiar with the players and the coaches.

Q. Obviously the measurables are all there with Keldric and what he brings to the table. How much are you banking on you and your coaching staff to be able to maximize the most?

ROBERT SALEH: Knock-on-wood, we've had a lot of history with guys with his skill set from Arik Armstead to a guy -- a gentleman who is here now, with John Franklin-Myers. We drafted James Williams a year ago. We know exactly what's going to be great with him, how to utilize his strengths, if you will.

But sky is the limit for this young man. He's young. There's a lot of football he's got to learn but we're excited

to have him.

Q. Where do you see Keldric fitting in that front seven? How many different ways do you feel like you can use him in?

ROBERT SALEH: Yeah, we're going to roll eight or nine on game day, and we roll them pretty good. We try to keep our guys around 60 percent play time, at max. Keep them fresh. Keep them rolling. We see him outside on early downs and kick him inside on pass downs.

And we think he's got an elite trait to rush the passer on the inside, and combination between him, Jeffrey, John Franklin-Myers, I mean, that's a pretty lethal combination between the three of them. We'll find different ways to get them all on the field.

Q. You guys have obviously brought in a lot of defensive talent, now more on the line, and you've talked about guys that could start outside and go inside and the 60 percent and all that. Could you talk in more detail? You've got a lot of guys who could start on the outside and pop inside but only so many third downs to do that on. How do you sort out the wide nine, in particular? Who is there right now in your head, and even in that 60 percent, how do you sort out outside to inside when you have so many guys that fit that bill?

ROBERT SALEH: For sure, that's one reason why Aaron Whitecotton gets paid so much money. In all seriousness, I know the two obvious ones are Jacob Martin and Jermaine, but I think a lot of people are forgetting about Femi. He was drafted last year.

He's a talented young man. We're going to do our best to give him every opportunity to be successful as a wide nine edge rusher on third down. We feel really good about the rotation that's being built here. I think Borgo has done a great job collecting a group of men that have different skillsets and have versatility to them.

Look, when you guys start watching us, and you'll start seeing what we do third down-wise with regards to our alignments and all the different fronts that we create to try

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to create one-on-ones and mismatches. And you know, so with regards to the complexity of it, it is complex trying to get all these guys on the field. But it's something that we're very comfortable with, and something we've done in our past and something we'll continue to do.

Q. What have the last 24 hours been like for both you guys, and what's it been like going through this process together?

KELDRIC FAULK: The last 24 hours, they kind of been a little hectic. Mostly exciting, though, just because I get to start a new part of my journey.

It's really been exciting. Came in the building today to get to know some of the great people in this building, and you know, I brought my family down here, so they get to witness it, as well. So it's been great.

CARNELL TATE: Like Keldric said, it's been hectic the past 24 hours. This is all we've ever worked for. We are very appreciative of the Titans organization for even believing news, and also it wouldn't be for without our parents and our family that got us this far. We appreciate them all and really appreciate the Titans organization for bringing us in.

Q. Carnell, your time at Ohio State, you played a myriad of roles. You played outside, inside, X, Z, slot. How do you feel like that's prepared you for the role here in Nashville, and then how fun is it going to be for you to learn from a guy like Greg Lewis, who will be the wide receivers, and then Calvin Ridley, who will be your wily veteran?

CARNELL TATE: Playing different roles in the offense will allow me to thrive and just allow me to understand the concepts that way if any guy goes down, I can move and go to a different position. That just shows how versatile I am, and also with these guys up here, if they are putting me in a position to go in the slot I'm ready for it. I've seen that look.

Q. You got to meet Cam today in person. What was that interaction like and what stood out the most?

CARNELL TATE: It was a fun interaction. Cam is a great guy, elite quarterback, great guy. I grew up watching him. I watched him at Washington State. We can't wait to get out there and light it up together.

Q. I wanted to ask both of you, have you had a chance to check out just the offense and defense that you're both joining, and what's the immediate things that stood out to you about where you'll fit in and what

you'll be able to contribute?

CARNELL TATE: I just got done watching a few plays today. Wherever the coaches need me to go out there and play, I think that's where I fit in. Whatever they ask for me, I'll give my all and go out there and do it.

KELDRIC FAULK: The first thing that popped out to me was that everybody play fast and violent. We set edges hard, and we play fast and we play violent. That's the thing that popped out to me the most. I feel like I could play a lot of the positions across the D-Line, like Coach said, on early downs like first and second on the edge, and having that ability to go inside on third downs, is where I see myself for sure.

Q. Carnell, you spoke yesterday briefly about Brian Hartline. Could you give us more detail about his impact on you, the nitty-gritty about how he affected Ohio State receivers, and you in particular?

CARNELL TATE: Coach Hartline did a great job with us, phenomenal job with all the receivers that came out of Ohio State. Obviously from Ohio, grew up an Ohio State fan, played at Ohio State and played at the highest level. All he did was pure his experience to us and allowed us to thrive and translate to the next level, and he also harped on details. Like little things with Coach Hartline that gets you to the next level, and he's always big on that and always big on getting better.

Q. The jump you took from sophomore year to junior year to emerge as a first round talent, what were the things you were emphasizing to take that leap, and how were you able to make that leap over that time?

CARNELL TATE: It was ultimately a mindset change to go out there. This is the year I had set for myself to go out there and ultimately declare for the Draft. Just go out there and show everybody who I think I am.

Q. Keldric, I wanted to ask you, a lot of your downs came from 5-tech, but you could play up and down the line of scrimmage. At your height, 6'6, what is it that allows you to be able to excel at the outside, as well as on the inside? And Coach, what are your thoughts on his versatility and how you'll be able to deploy him?

KELDRIC FAULK: Really just my length. My length has given me the ability to just go down there and hold my own on the inside. Set edges when I'm on the edge. And then it's just the power that I bring behind it.

So my length and power just help me do both of them really well.

ROBERT SALEH: The other part, too, and he didn't mention, his short area quickness and his foot speed is really, really good for a man of his size, which is why kicking inside, when you bring that combination of power, length and then the foot speed and short area quickness, that's a really, really tough down for a guard, which is why we think he can win in there more consistently if we can get him going on reps.

Q. You mentioned yesterday that you felt like you had just kind of scratched the surface about what you're capable of doing in the NFL. Can you elaborate on some of the things you think you can do better in this league?

KELDRIC FAULK: Yeah, like one of the things was rush the passer better. I mean, I had too many pressures and not enough sacks. Too many times where I got to the quarterback and didn't finish that play.

So like I said, it's just so much room that I have in that. It's a small thing but it's a huge thing in my mind. Like that's the next -- that's the next 10 to 20 percent that I need to get, and from there, it's just defining everything that I already have and making sure that I perfect them. You know, take some time but I'm perfecting myself for sure.

Q. At what point did the NFL become a dream for both of you guys, and how did you make here today?

CARNELL TATE: It became a dream my eighth grade year. That's when I made the transition to receiver from fully on, and from there, I fell in love with the game. I knew I could have fun and go and do great things. That's what I fell in love with it and had dreams of playing in the NFL.

KELDRIC FAULK: I kind of fell in love with it going into my eighth grade year. Got my first offer going into the eighth grade, and then shoot, from there, it's just like, what else can I do with it? And then I figure, like, why not take it out of 8 -- take it out of 8 (indiscernible).

Q. Who made that offer?

KELDRIC FAULK: It was UAB.

Q. You said last night you didn't want to project any expectations, but when you take two guys in the first round, I'm assuming you're expecting them to be foundational pieces of the future of the franchise. What about these two guys makes you believe that they can develop into that?

MIKE BORGONZI: A lot of the stuff I talked yesterday.

Obviously they are very talented. That's why they are being taken in the first round.

But another part of that is, all these guys have to develop no matter where they are taken, and what -- how can they get to their ceiling as a player. And like I said, they embody everything that -- that takes them to the next level in their game. It's their work ethic, their commitment to being the best. You know, to film watching. It's a lot of stuff that, you know, we uncovered with our scouts, really, going into school and talking with people and what they are all about.

So that's why we are very confident that they are going to be able to contribute.

Q. For Mike and Robert, if you can please both answer, and traditionally, I know these guys are both top-notch but traditionally guys coming out of big programs, big conferences, drafted in the first round come out with mounds of numbers. And both of their production is maybe what you wouldn't see from a No. 4 pick or big-time pass rusher; Keldric's talked about. Can you talk about the degree of projection you're doing and what you thought as you scouted them about their production in college?

MIKE BORGONZI: I think you're always looking for, obviously, the upside. Every position is different no matter what position they are playing or what the scheme is and the talent. You know, we certainly think they are going to be very productive at this level.

You know, Keldric has just talked about it. Things that he can improve in his game, and Carnell has played -- he's gotten better every year and he's played with some pretty good receivers at Ohio State, as well.

But that's part of when you're going through the whole process and scouting is projecting, too. We feel like these guys are going to be high-level production pieces in the NFL for us.

ROBERT SALEH: Same thing. Production, that's part of the evaluation but it's not the entire evaluation. You're always looking at circumstance. You're always looking at situation, and these two young men are going to produce in this league.

I'm sure you can make an argument for Carnell that every opportunity that he got, he took advantage of it. It's not his fault that they are blowing teams out in the first half and they are only playing a half a game, you know.

So you can make all kinds of -- pinpoint all those things but



the fact of the matter is these are two extremely talented young men, and they are going to be very, very productive in this league.

Q. From your vantage point, what was the process leading up to the No. 4 pick and merging with the front office? Obviously there was a bunch of speculation about maybe going defense and fitting your strengths at 4. How did you guys land at Carnell from the coaching staff perspective, and what was your input in general?

ROBERT SALEH: Well, not to say it's the most important piece but he's a pretty damn important piece, and that's quarterback and doing everything we can to help him and surround him with players who can get the ball in their hand and go score.

So Carnell is obviously by far the top receiver on our board, and so when we got to 4, it was a very easy decision to make?

Q. We talked last week with you about how many older place are coming out, and you talked about how you have to gauge how close they are to their ceiling. Both these guys being really young, how much of a part of the evaluation was that?

MIKE BORGONZI: Yeah, I think that can be, certainly, a part of it. These guys were 20 years old last year playing, and so that's certainly part of it. We think there's obviously room to grow with every player that enters the league. They have to develop more. Certainly with these guys, they have a lot of potential here to get even better than they are right now for sure.

Q. This team last year lacked for explosive plays, especially in the pass game. Obviously being picked at No. 4 overall they are going to expect you to provide some of that. What are some of the ways you think you can bring explosiveness?

CARNELL TATE: The same way I brought explosiveness at the collegiate level. Just going out there and making the most of my opportunities and showing the team that they can trust me and put the ball in my hands more and more.

Q. Carnell, this is for you. Who are the receivers that you've tried to take bits and pieces from their game and maybe incorporate into yours? And the second part is, how do you describe your approach or mentality as a receiver?

CARNELL TATE: All I do is watch football. So I've watched Davante Adams a lot, Stefon Diggs and C-Rid,

who is here. The mentality of football is just go out there, make the most of it, and wills just what happens when the ball comes your way. Either you make the play or you don't.

Q. Your GM talked last night about your ability to contort your body to make unique catches. Where does that come from?

CARNELL TATE: (Laughing) Just comes from the mindset of just going out there, liked, when the ball comes your way, just go out there and go get the ball. When the ball is in the air, the team is depending you to go out there and go make that play. So by any means, you have to go out there and make that play for the team.

Q. Why did that produce such laughter from you?

CARNELL TATE: It was just a different way to put it, the question, that's it. (Laughter).

Q. Ohio State, obviously, is known as one of the wide receiver factories. How much did you guys really benefit from being able to push each other, and also with press coverage, how personally do you take that, and what is it that makes you feel as an X receiver that you'll be able to be on the ball and beat DBs the way you have to?

CARNELL TATE: We take that very personal at Ohio State. Like I said, I'm thankful for the ones that came before me that allow me to be on the path I am today. The older guys paved the way for the younger guys, so I'm thankful for them.

And also, we just learn from each other, whether that's different moves to run in the field or even just off the field, how each guy have their own routine. So just learning from each other and perfecting our own routine.

Q. And also, about that press coverage?

CARNELL TATE: Yeah, press. In the NFL, in the league, you just have to know to win on one-on-one coverages. That's all it's about. You have to take that very personal. The team is going to rely on you to go out there and win that one-on-one matchup with the tough corner on the other side of you. That's very personal, and the biggest thing in the league is, can you win one-on-one coverage, so yeah.

Q. Have you guys known each other before last night, and what was the plane ride like? What's it like knowing that you're kind of in this together moving forward?

KELDRIC FAULK: Shoot, I seen him one time before. We shot basketball together but that's about it.

Plane ride -- plane ride was cool. Like, man, it's exciting. Like to have this kind of caliber player, you know, get drafted in the first round with me, is a blessing in itself, and I can't wait to get to know him and you know get to be a teammate for him.

CARNELL TATE: Yeah, that's how we met. We met on a little trip. He carried me at basketball. We was out there shooting, and I was out there disappointing him. From there, we just chopped it up.

Q. You played basketball in high school, didn't you?

KELDRIC FAULK: I did.

Q. How did that turn out in did you have any one-on-one action?

KELDRIC FAULK: Oh, no, no, no. We ain't doing that. (Laughter).

Q. Yesterday Keldric had a pretty candid moment where he said he didn't know much about the Titans or the NFL in general. How much of maybe that transparency and accountability at a young age fits the culture that you guys are trying to build here?

ROBERT SALEH: For sure, that's a good one. Transparency is everything. Communication is everything. Being able to speak your mind and have confidence that you can walk right into your coach's office and tell him what's on your mind and try to nip whatever negativity is flowing through your head. Try to get it out and get it solved.

They are both extremely young, which is awesome. They both haven't even scratched the surface of what we think they are capable of, and Mike hit it on the head in his opening statement. These two are elite character men who have elite work ethic, and they are going to find a way to get better. They are going to maximize who they are.

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